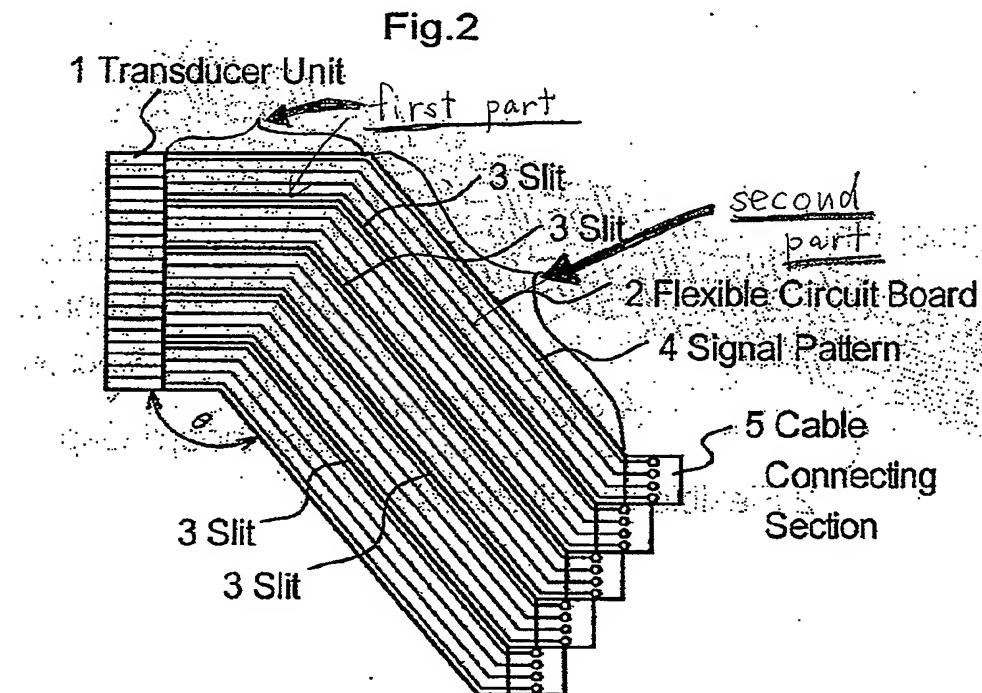


REMARKS

By the above amendment, independent claims 1 and 11 have been amended to more particularly define the features of the flexible circuit board as illustrated in Fig. 2 of the drawings of this application and as described at page 6, line 25 to page 7, line 13 of the specification. Additionally, new dependent claims 12 and 14 reciting further features of the flexible circuit board have been presented.

As an aid to the Examiner, Fig. 2 of the drawings of this application is reproduced below with annotation:



wherein as now recited in claims 1 and 11, and referring to the annotation, the flexible circuit board includes a first part which extends from the transducer unit 1 in a longitudinal direction of the plurality of transducers and a second part which is

connected to the first part and extends at a predetermined angle with respect to the longitudinal direction extension of the first part so as to form a bend at the predetermined angle with respect to the first part, the predetermined angle being indicated by the angle θ . Such features are now recited in claim 1 and 11 and further, new dependent claims 12 and 13 recite the feature, as also illustrated in Fig. 2, that a length of portions of the first part in the longitudinal direction gradually decrease as the portions become closer to an inner side of the bend. Applicants note that in accordance with the feature previously recited in claims 1 and 11, the flexible circuit board has slits 3 dividing signal lines of the flexible circuit board into a plurality of sections of the flexible circuit board, and each section of the flexible circuit board which is divided by at least one of the slits of the flexible circuit is spirally wound, noting that the disposition of the signal lines to the transducers becomes easier because the first part extends from the transducers in the longitudinal direction of the transducers and at the beginning of the spirally wound portion, each section of the flexible circuit board does not intertwine with each other because the second part is connected to the transducers via the first part. Applicants submit that such features as now recited in claims 1 and 11 and the dependent claims are supported in the original drawings and specification of this application, and are not disclosed or taught in the cited art, as will become clear from the following discussion.

As to the rejection of claims 1 - 8, 10 and 11 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nix et al (US 7,037,269B2) in view of Kimura et al (JP 11305143A), such rejections are traversed insofar as it is applicable to the present claims, and reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Turning to Nix et al, irrespective of whether Nix et al may be considered to have a flexible circuit board 12, it is readily apparent that while Nix et al may be considered to disclose a flexible circuit board which includes a first part which extends from the transducer unit in a longitudinal direction of the plurality of transducers, Nix et al does not disclose or teach a second part which is connected to the first part and extends at a predetermined angle with respect to the longitudinal direction extension of the first part so as to form a bend at the predetermined angle with respect to the first part. Thus, applicants submit that claims 1 and 11, as amended, patentably distinguish over Nix et al with respect to this feature alone. In this regard, the Examiner recognizes that Nix et al fail to teach the flexible circuit board having a plurality of sections which are separately wound.

In an attempt to overcome the deficiency of Nix et al, as recognized by the Examiner, with respect to a plurality of sections which are separately wound, the Examiner cites Kimura et al referring to Fig. 4 and paragraphs [0020] - [0027] thereof. Irrespective of the contentions by the Examiner, applicants submit that Kimura et al fails to overcome the deficiencies of Nix et al in relation to the flexible circuit board having a first part and second part, wherein the second part is connected to the first part and extends at a predetermined angle with respect to the longitudinal direction extension of the first part so as to form a bend at the predetermined angle with respect to the first part. Thus, applicants submit that claims 1 and 11, as amended, recites features which patentably distinguish over Nix et al and Kimura et al, taken alone, or in any combination thereof, and all claims should be considered allowable thereover.

With respect to the dependent claims, applicants note that the dependent claims recite further features of the present invention, noting that claim 14 which

depends from claim 11 and corresponds to the features of claim 2. Further, new dependent claims 12 and 13 defines the feature of decreasing length of portions of the first part of the flexible circuit board as such portions become closer to the bend, which feature is also not disclosed or taught in the cited art. Accordingly, applicants submit that the dependent claims, when considered in conjunction with parent claim 1 further patentably distinguish over the cited art and should be considered allowable thereover.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, applicants submit that all claims should now be in condition for allowance, and issuance of an action of a favorable nature is courteously solicited.

Also, submitted herewith is an information disclosure Statement and consideration thereof is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the deposit account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Case: 529.44217X00), and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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